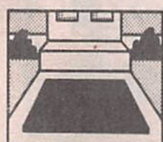
Follow easy path to building a b

By Do It Yourself
A Meredith Magazine / Associated Press Newsfeatures



WELCOME MAT

How many people have nixed the idea of having a brick patio and path because they thought it would be too costly and complicated? Better Homes and Gardens Do It Yourself magazine suggests laying the bricks in sand rather than in concrete or mortar. It's easy, and the flexible joints allow the bricks to ride out cold weather.

CHOOSING AND BUYING BRICK

Bricks come in a variety of colors and textures. For people who don't live in frost-free climates, it's best to purchase SW (severe weather) grade bricks to withstand freeze-thaw weather cycles.

Before making any purchases, it's a good idea to visit several brick suppliers. A variety of standard-size bricks in many colors, textures, shapes, and sizes are available. Once the selection is made, ask the supplier to estimate the quantity of bricks that will be needed (know the dimensions of the area to be paved).

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

Round up these tools: a spade, shovel, level, brick chisel and hammer. Get some small wood stakes, twine, a wheelbarrow and a long 2x4. Use the 2x4 to screed, or level, the sand smooth. It may be necessary to notch the ends of the 2x4 to fit over the brick edging — depending on whether the owner wants the edging flush with the patio surface or raised.

A 40-mil polyethylene sheeting to completely cover the excavated area and enough sand to create a 2- to 4-inch base beneath the bricks and to sweep between the joints will also be needed. Sand is commonly sold by the ton (one ton covers a 10x12-foot area with 2 inches of sand). A dealer can estimate the exact amount.

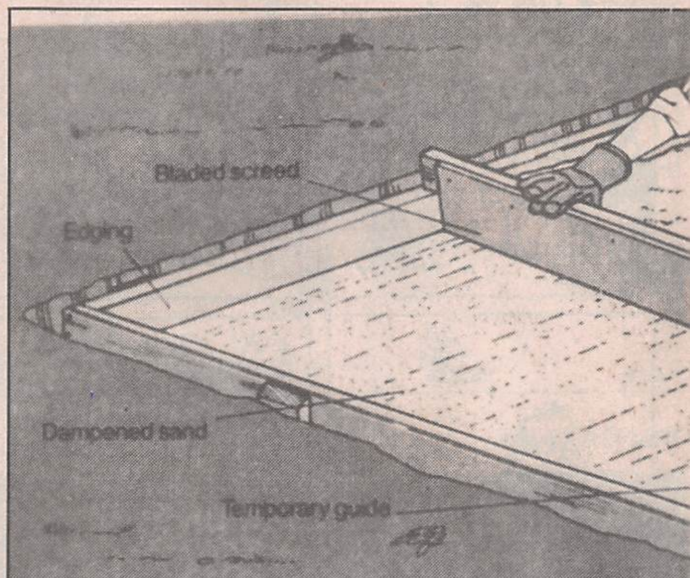
PREPARING THE BASE

— Using twine and small stakes, mark off the intended area, then remove the sod. Remove the topsoil to a depth equal to the thickness of the brick plus 2 to 4 inches for sand. The floor of the excavated area should slope away from any adjoining structure at a rate of ¼-inch per foot to allow for drainage.

— For brick edging, cut a trench to the desired depth around the perimeter of the excavation.

— Spray the floor of the excavation with weed killer. Then cover the entire area with the 4-mil polyethylene sheeting to prevent most plant growth. Install the edging.

— Spread sand to a depth of 2 to 4 inches and settle the surface by sprinkling the area with water. Level the bed by drawing the screed across the sand.



Drawings from

To lay bricks in the sand, once edgings are installed, layer of damp sand. Level sand bed with a bladed sc you go. If necessary, use temporary guides as show



Stretch a mason's line to help align courses. Then, b bricks tightly against one another, a course at a time, mallet or hammer. Mason's level should be used to r

LAYING THE BRICK

— When placing the bricks, use a level to ensure that all the bricks are at the same height. Use a taut line as a guide to help lay a straight, even course

— To cut a brick chi line, make t dicular to t

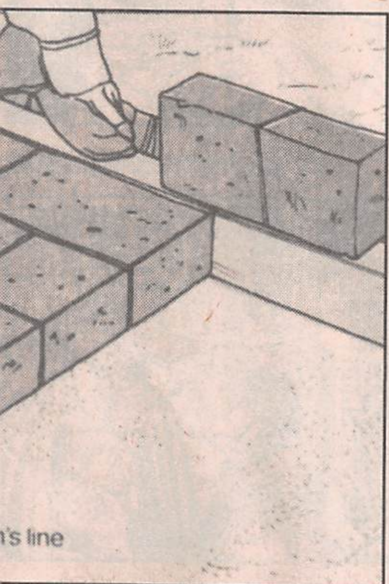
— Sprea face of the

rick patio



"The Complete Patio Book" (Sunset Books)

lay down a 1- to 1½-inch thick eed, using a sawing motion as n.



eginning from one corner, lay tapping each into place with a ake sure the bricks are even.

brick, tap along a cutoff line using el and hammer. After scoring the e cut by holding the chisel perpen- e brick; give the chisel a sharp rap. a thin layer of sand over the sur- ewly laid bricks and gently sweep back and forth with a broom so the sand fills the joints. Hose the entire surface with a light spray. Repeat the process — sanding, sweeping and watering — several times.

Mason's level
Rubber mallet
Brickset
Mason's hammer
Jointers
Pointed trowel
Steel trowel
Corner blocks
Steel measuring tape
Line level
Brick tongs
Mason's twine
Carpenter's square

Specialized tools, along with those already in your workshop, can be used to lay a brick patio.